

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 CIAE-00
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R 101407Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6527
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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SUBJECT: U.S. VIEWS DOMINATE PEACE COVERAGE

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SUMMARY. PRESS COVERAGE OF PEACE PROCESS DRAWS HOPE-
FULLY ON STATEMENTS FROM PRESIDENT CARTER, SECRETARY
AND DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ILLUMINATING DIFFERENCES WITH
ISRAEL. COMMENTARY ON U.S. ROLE SUSPENDED, WHILE BEGIN
MANEUVERING AGAIN SCORED. EGYPTIANS WOULD LIKE TO
CONCLUDE BEGIN HAS ALL THE ROPE HE NEEDS, BUT ARE NOT
SURE WHO WILL BE HANGED WITH IT. GAMASY MAKES ROUTINE
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MARTYRS' DAY PRONOUNCEMENTS ON EGYPTIAN CAPABILITY
CONFRONT ALL CHALLENGES. END SUMMARY.

1. FOCUS ON PEACE PROCESS COVERAGE MARCH 10 WAS
NARROWLY ON U.S. STATEMENTS ILLUMINATING DIFFERENCES
WITH ISRAEL. PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS WERE FEATURED,
TEXTUALLY IMPROVED TO READ "ISRAELI REFUSAL COMMIT

ITSELF TO UN RESOLUTIONS STIPULATING WITHDRAWAL CONSTITUTES HEAVY BLOW TO PEACE PROSPECTS AND IS RETREAT FROM WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH." HOWEVER, REPORTS ALSO INCLUDED PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT THAT U.S. CONTINUES TO PLAY ROLE OF MEDIATOR AND HE DOES NOT INTEND PRESSURE BEGIN. PAPERS ALSO SAY DEPARTMENT OF STATE "ADMITTED FOR FIRST TIME" DIFFERENCES BETWEEN U.S. AND ISRAEL ON WITHDRAWAL QUESTION. RESTON QUOTED "THERE ARE DIFFERENCES AND WE BELIEVE 242 APPLIES TO ALL FRONTS."

2. ARMS. SECRETARY QUOTED THAT U.S. BELIEVES ISRAELI ARMS REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT JUSTIFIED. SECDEF BROWN ALSO CITED WITH ANNOUNCEMENT THAT JET SALES TO ISRAEL WILL DEPEND ON APPROVAL SAUDI AND EGYPTIAN PORTION OF ARMS PACKAGE.

3. EGYPT READY FOR ANYTHING. DULY PROMINENT COVERAGE OF EGYPTIAN MARTYRS' DAY CEREMONIES PLAYED UP MINDEF GAMASY REMARK THAT EGYPT CAPABLE OF CONFRONTING ALL CHALLENGES AND LOOKS TO FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE. GUMHURIYYA EDITORIAL AGREED, ARGUING MILITARY READINESS IS REAL GUARANTEE FOR REALIZING PEACE.

4. BOOST FROM SAUDIS. CROWN PRINCE FAHD, ACCORDING KUWAITI PRESS ITEM PUBLISHED HERE, HAS STATED SAUDIS UNCLASSIFIED

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"WOULD NOT MIND" RECOGNIZING ISRAEL WITHIN FRAMEWORK COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

5. COMMENT. EGYPTIANS RESISTED TEMPTATION TO GUILD LILLY OF U.S.-ISRAELI DIFFERENCES WITH REMINDERS OF IMPORTANCE OF "ACTIVE U.S. ROLE". AT LEAST FOR TODAY, CHERISHED SCENARIO THAT BEGIN WILL EXHAUST U.S. PATIENCE SEEMS TO HAVE ACQUIRED NEW LIFE. IN EGYPTIAN VIEW, BEGIN HAS AMASSED MORE THAN ENOUGH ROPE TO HANG HIMSELF. THEIR FEAR IS THAT UNLESS U.S. ACTIVELY STAYS HIS HAND, BEGIN WILL USE IT TO STRANGLE SADAT PEACE INITIATIVE INSTEAD. EILTS

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